Nixon Dismisses Resignation Talk

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WASHINGTON (AP) — President Nixon, dismissing any talk of his resigning as "just plain poppycock," vowed Friday he "will work right up to the hilt" even if it endangers his health.

Returning to the White House from the Bethesda Naval Medical Center where he fought off viral pneumonia, Nixon told several hundred aides and employes who gathered in the Rose Garden to welcome him: "Let others wallow in Watergate, we are going to do our job."

Looking fit and rested following his week-long hospital stay, Nixon acknowledged his doctors want him to "slow down a little now and take some time off and relax a little more."

"No one in this great office at this time in the world's history can slow down, he went on. "This office requires a president who will work right up to the hilt all the time."

Declaring that many people believe a fast pace might endanger his health, Nixon said, "the health of a man is not nearly as important as the health of the nation and the health of the world."

The chief executive said some well-intentioned people suspect that illness can result from the burdens of the presidency and "the rather rough assault that any man in this office gets from time to time."

Such people, he said, have wondered if his own illness might mean he would "get so tired that I would consider either slowing down or even, some suggested, resigning."

Promising he will neither slow down nor resign before his elected term ends, Nixon said of any talk to the contrary, "That is just plain poppycock."

His audience applauded.

Nixon spent his first morning out of the hospital working at the White House with his staff.